HERALD OF GOSPEL LIBERTY.

BY ELIAS SMITH.

NO. 5.] THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 27, 1808. [VOL. 1.

"FROM REALMS FAR DISTANT, AND FROM CLIMES UNKNOWN; WE MAKE THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR KING YOUR OWN."

THE PREACHER.

SERMON No. IV.

A Sermon on the Times.

1 CHRONICLES XII. 32. *"And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command.*

IN order to apply this verse to the present TIME, the following things will be done:

1st. Give a description of the present times.

2d. Shew what is meant by having understanding of the times; who those public men are who have understanding of the times; how they do prove it.

3d. The state of their brethren, or the people in general, "all their brethren were at their command."

Much is meant in the scriptures by the word TIME, and TIMES.

Sometimes it means a measure of duration, a season or opportunity.

In the text, and several other places, it means the state, or situation of the world, at the present, or that which is to come.

The men of Issachar had understanding of the times, they knew the state of the people of their own nation, and of the nations around them.

We often hear of good times—hard times—poor times—bad times—trying times—prosperous times—uncertain times—discouraging times—difficult times—peaceable times—confused times—war times &c.

The present TIMES, as it respects ourselves, and other nations we ought to understand, and those who are wise will endeavor so to do, as fast as it is possible for them to understand.—"Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth both TIME and judgment."

The present TIME or state of the world is on several accounts, very trying, alarming, and critical; which is plain from a view of the following particulars:

1st. It is evidently the last TIMES, as spoken of by Christ, and the Apostles, or the TIMES of the last struggles among the nations of the earth, before the coming of Christ to reign on the earth, when wars shall cease to the ends of the earth; and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ. The present, are perilous TIMES, which proves them the last times. 2 Tim. 3, 1. "This know also, that in the last days perilous TIMES shall come."

There are now perils by sea and land, in the wilderness and city, and among false brethren. The signs in the heavens, earth, sea, among kingdoms, and nations, shew these to be the last TIMES.

2d. This is a time when one rules over another to his own hurt, as is stated by Solomon, Eccle. 8, 9. "There is a time wherein one man ruleth another to his own hurt. See at this time, kings and queens beheaded, because they ruled over men in unrighteousness.

3d. How singular is the state of the world now in every part where men live.

In *Europe*, every movement breathes war and destruction. Two nations risen in power, have been the occasion of a general convulsion thro'out almost the whole world; and though they are continually at war with each other; yet neither can at present overcome.

England is at this time the most powerful nation by sea on earth; France is the most powerful by land. If *England* should engage *France* by land, they would soon be overcome; if *France* undertakes by sea to conquer *England*, they would be soon subdued. Both powers know this; and remain enemies to each other. This being the state of the two nations, whoever has any commerce with one, enrages the other, because, an enemy is strengthened. According to the blockading decree on one side, and the orders of council on the other; the nation which trades with *England*, is liable to be taken by *France*, if they trade with *France*, *England* makes a demand, which places every nation in a critical situation.

This being one thing peculiar to the times, the United States, are of course placed in a singular situation: Before the blockading decrees of *Bonaparte*, and the orders of the *British council*, we being a *neutral power*, had the carrying trade, without being taken by either; now it is different. The fact as it respects the times in our country is this; if our *vessels, produce, money*, and *men*, are at *sea*, we are almost certain to suffer the loss of our *ships*, which are to strengthen the *British* or *French* navy, our *produce* to feed their seamen, our *money* to help carry on their war; our MEN to fight their battles, to be confined in guardships, to be *hung* at the *yard-arm*, to *die in battle*, or *to live a wretched life of slavery under the name of freedom.*

What would an impartial judge say was best for a nation to do at such a time? a nation that can live without either of the *belligerent powers*, and a nation which can retire from the war on either side, and still maintain a neutral situation? Would he say, plunge into a *war* with either, or peaceably withdraw from both? Certainly he would say, *keep your ships, produce, money, and men at home, better your ships should rot at your wharves, than to have them, their cargoes, money, and men, fall into the hands of any other power on earth*; or *to risk a voyage with the uncertain hope of return.*

4th. As it respects the people called the United States, there are several things, which render the TIMES worthy the attention of every individual.

Our name is UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. This land is yet *America*. The *States* remain; but where is the *union* of the people? Are we united in the *form of government?* No. Are we united in things of *religion?* No. Are we agreed what is the best measure, as it respects other nations; particularly, *England*, and *France?* No. Look at one State, according to a late account—*Federal Governor—Republican Lieut. Governor—Federal Council—Federal Treasurer—Republican Speaker, Secretary of State, and Clerk of the House*—twelve or fifteen majority of *Republicans* in the House of *Representatives.*

This shews that people are governed more by *opinion* than by their understandings.

As it respects religion; some wish for the *old establishment of Church and State*, the priest paid as the officers of State are; others, are for having all free, according to the constitution of the States. There is no doubt in my mind, but the *Clergy in Newengland*, are laying every plan to accomplish what they have long wished for, a perpetual union of Church and State. There is scarcely an instance of a plan to enslave mankind, *soul* and *body*, but that order of men are forward in it, nor a struggle for freedom, but what they are against it. Though the President is (as it respects religion in belief and practice) exactly in harmony with the constitution of the general government; yet they are constantly abusing him, by calling him an infidel, deist, &c.

I have been told of late that one of this class in the interior part of *this State* has told his hearers, that an infidel at the head of government, is the cause of all our difficulties. If he thinks so, he must be a very ignorant man indeed, not "having understanding of the times."

From all I can learn, there is a new set of cord makers, in Newengland. As I understand it, a twofold cord is to be made, spun

from Passamaquoddy to New York, to be at a proper TIME laid together to hang the people *soul* and *body* (as in England under lords temporal, and lords spiritual) that they may be kept in *their order*. The Clergy are now combining together in a new fashion, in Newengland.—They are *associating associations* of *ministers*.—This possibly accounts for the late journey of two ministers to Connecticut, from the State of Newhampshire.

This combination is published by them in the *Repository* No. 6, in the following words;

"A meeting of the general Association of Massachusetts *proper*, was holden at Worcester, on the last Wednesday in June 1808; the Rev. Joseph Lee was chosen moderator, and Rev. Alvin Hyde, scribe." At this meeting were present ministers from the associations in Berkshire county; from the mountain Association; from the Hamshire Association; Central Association, Worcester Association; Westminister Association; Haverhill Association; Essex middle Association. Delegates were sent from Brookfield and Andover Associations, to know the nature of this general Association, who were invited to set as honorary members.

It appears that the *clergy* in Connecticut have likewise formed a general Association upon the same plan; and that it is the design of this meeting to join with them according to the following vote;

"*Voted*, that two of the brethren be appointed in behalf of this *Association*, to visit the general association of ministers in *Connecticut*, at their next meeting, to learn their disposition, as to forming an union with this Association, and the terms on which the union may be established."

The same kind of union has taken place among the Congregational Clergy in different parts of England and Wales of late.

I hope my fears concerning this *Association* will prove to be groundless; but when I compare this with the political movements for a change of government, or administration, and see a plan to separate Newengland from the other States, published from *Boston*, and hear that *Political*, and *Clerical Anti-Republicans* are combined together, I cannot but mention it to my fellow citizens, that they may be on their guard, lest their liberty should be taken before they know of it in season to avoid such a loss.

5th. Among all other things peculiar to the TIMES, there is a noble and spirited exertion yet made by multitudes in this country, to retain that *civil* and *religious Liberty*, which God has given, and which for several years past we have in a good degree enjoyed; and which we may yet enjoy, if we will. The friends of good government, doubtless have been too negligent; and while men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares. In addition to all this, the gospel is preached with success, by men who preach freely to their fellow men, travelling from place to place, and baptizing those who in heart submit to the king of glory.

This is but a short view of the TIMES, there is not room to proceed; the subject might profitably till a volume.

2. We notice what is meant by having understanding of the *times*—who those public men are that have understanding of the *times*, and how they prove it.

The men of Issachar were not only in a public station; but they were public men, having the good of their brethren in view in all they did. Having understanding of the times, does not mean, knowing how to enrich or aggrandize ourselves by deceiving, or enslaving others; but it means a general knowledge of our own affairs as a nation, and the state of the nations with whom we have any concern, knowing how one measure or another will operate when attended to.

Who are the public men that have understanding of the times? Are they such as plead in favour of a government, founded on principles exactly opposite to ours? Are they such as are continually complaining of our government, and praising the one under which we once groaned like Israel in Egypt? Are they such as would divide the nation? or plunge us in a war with *France* or *England*? Surely no. If such men have understanding of the *times*, they must be very wicked to do such violence to their understandings. Men that have unstanding of the times, prove it, by doing their own duty, and knowing and teaching others their duty in a fair and candid manner.

When I read what has been said on both sides respecting our affairs as a nation, it appears to me as it does to many others; that our rulers have taken the most suitable measures, that could be attended to in this very critical *time*.

As for thinking magistrates or preachers are proving that they understand the times, while they are binding men to the commands and doctrines of men contrary to the commands of God, I cannot believe it, nor can any man of sense tamely submit to their laws.

3d. We notice the state of the people when public men seek the general good of the whole, "All their brethren were at their command." Whenever the ruled are convinced that men in authority know the state of the *times*, and are seeking the general good, instead of rebellion, and division, they will unitedly submit to that which they ought.

Let the principle of republicanism be fairly stated and understood by the common people, let the nature of *civil* and *religious Liberty* be stated to them; let the situation of *France*, *England* and other European powers, be laid before them as it it is, and the state of our country on account of the *wars of Europe*; and then ask them; is it best to proclaim war against either of them or not? Is it best to enter into an alliance offensive and defensive with *England* or *France*? They would answer, no. Is it best to leave the seas, until times are different? they would answer, yes. Then remember, that when you give your voice for men of different principles from those now in authority, you give away your liberty; *to entail bondage on yourselves and heirs, with all its attendant miseries.*

While we attend to the present *times*; let us not be unmindful of the *times* which the Father hath kept in his own hands, let us remember our *times* are with him, that in his *times*, he will shew who is the blessed and only POTENTATE; and that ere long it will be said "*Time shall be no longer.*" O, that we may be prepared ed for a *time* of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when he shall send Jesus to reign in righteousness in all the earth.

AMEN.

LIBERTY. NO. 5.

IT has been mentioned in a former number, that real *Liberty* cannot be enjoyed without government—three kinds were mentioned, *Despotic*, *Monarchical*, and *Republican*. The first kind has been described, and the state of the people noticed in short, who live under such a government; it has been proved that *Liberty* is not found in the dominion of a Despot. We now notice;

2d. MONARCHY, *or the meaning of a monarchical government.*

The word MONARCHY signifies, one who governs alone, and means a large state governed by one, or a state where the *Supreme Power* is lodged in the hands of a single person.

The name of the first king on earth was NIMROD, who lived two generations after the flood. The beginning of his kingdom was *Babel*, or *Babylon*, which means confusion: which has ever been the state of the people, where one man has the whole command. *Nimrod* was a mighty hunter; he hunted beasts to support his *army*, and hunted men, to reduce them to his will. Hunting has ever since been the favourite amusement of kings. As they act like beasts, they and their dogs are often seen together in obtaining victories over the innocent.

When Nimrod usurped the *crown* or deprived the people of *liberty*; the Monarchical spirit run through the world like a raging plague. *Ashur* went out of the land of *Shinar*, where *Nimrod's* seat was, and built Nineveh, and founded the *Assyrian Monarchy*; and the contagion of having *kings* and being *kings*, so greatly prevailed, that every little village had a king.

Some *Monarchies* are considered absolute, and others limited; or the people are considered as having a check upon the power of the king.

This is the state of the kingdom of England. It is understood by *the people*, that the king has only the executive power, and that the *legislative* is shared by *him* and *the people*. Notwithstanding this, he appoints the officers by which the business of the nation is carried on; he can prevent any bill from passing into a law;

His person is considered sacred and inviolable, and he cannot in the eye of the law do wrong. *He is the supreme commander of the army and navy, and the head of the church.* For all this, he is paid by an enslaved people, 900 thousand pounds sterling in a year!!! This government has, according to a late writer, sunk the people of England in a debt of more than two hundred and eighty millions; so that the interest of their debt, together with the support of the *civil* and *military lists*, imposes an annual tax on the people, equal to thirty shillings sterling per man, and at the expiration of the year, the nation is a million pounds more in debt than at the beginning! Does such a government look like a place of liberty? It does not. What rational man is there who would wish for such a government as this, or an alliance with it?

As I mean in the next numbers to give a more particular description of the *English Government*, and the state of civil and religious liberty there, I forbear at present.

(To be continued.)

A friend wishes to know the meaning of this place of scripture, Matt. 24, 32. "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

Yours, P. H.

The difficulty turns upon the meaning of the word *generation*. If that word always means the people on the earth at one time, I see no way to understand the text. I think it evident from the scriptures, that the word *generation*, means a particular people, wherever they are found. This you will find is often the meaning of the word; Deut. 32, 5. "They are a perverse and crooked *generation*." Generation means the same as a nation—verse 20. "For they are a very froward *generation*, children in whom is no faith." This certainly refers to the nation of the Jews, and not to those alive at that time. Psalm 14, 5. For God is in the *generation* of the righteous." This means all the righteous, let them live when and where they may. Psalm 22, 30. "A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a *generation*."

Here a generation, means all who serve Christ. Psalm 73, 15. "If I say, I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against the *generation* of thy children." It is plain from this, that the word *generation* means all the children of God in all ages.

Proverbs 30, 11, 12, 13, 14. "There is a *generation* that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother." Such people surely are not confined, but are to be found in every age. "There is a *generation* that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a *generation*, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation whose teeth are as swords."

1 Pet 2, 9. "But ye are a chosen generation." From all these places, it is evident that the word generation often means a particular kind of people, whether good or bad.

This being the meaning of the word, we may understand Christ's meaning to be this; this people, this nation, shall never be cut off or mix with other nations so as not to be known from all others on earth, until all the signs in heaven, earth, and sea appear; and until the son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

We may see the truth of all this to the present time. Notwithstanding all the wars, pestilences, persecutions, and distresses which the Jews have experienced beyond what any other nation ever endured; they yet remain a generation in whom is no faith; scattered all over the earth, and so will remain till they shall say of Christ, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

What a striking proof of the truth of the prophecies, are the people of this generation to this day! O may the day come, when they shall be a generation to join with the gentiles to honor the root of Jesse world without end.

IMMORTALITY.

MUCH is said in the world concerning IMMORTALITY; and many know not what they affirm. IMMORTALITY is spoken of in general as refering to some part of mortal man.

Multitudes speak of the immortal soul, not enquiring whether it is so or not; but from general opinion they suppose they speak truth.

When speaking or writing upon IMMORTALITY, I do not mean what is commonly understood by it, or what Philosophers think; but what is meant by the word in the scriptures of truth. Whatever is not found there, I consider false; all said on the subject there, I believe. What is not expressed, is not meant.

The word IMMORTAL, is mentioned but once in the whole Bible. The word IMMORTALITY is mentioned five times.

This word signifies that which is durable; or not subject to any decay whatever; remaining eternally the same.

This being the meaning of the word, the reader will now be shown how it is used in the Scriptures.

1st. The word is applied to the Eternal God; 1 Timothy, 1, 17. "Now unto the king Eternal, IMMORTAL, invisible, the only wise God, be honor, and glory, forever and ever, Amen.—Chap. VI. 16. "Who only hath IMMORTALITY, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

Here is the fountain of IMMORTALITY; the king Eternal, IMMORTAL, and invisible. I once thought these verses referred to Christ; but he was once mortal, or he could not have died; since he rose from the dead, he is immortal, to live forever, for, "God raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory." In one place God is called *incorruptible*, which means the same as IMMORTAL: Rom. 1, 23. "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man."

2d. The word IMMORTALITY, is mentioned where we are told how mortal man could become IMMORTAL, or this mortal put on IMMORTALITY. 2 Tim. 1, 10. "But now is made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death; and hath brought life and IMMORTALITY to light through the gospel.

In this verse we are told that Jesus Christ the MEDIATOR between God and men, has bro't life and immortality to light through the gospel: he said, "God is a spirit." He told men of eternal life, and that those who obey him shall be raised IMMORTAL at the resurrection of the just.

Many wished they might live again; but Jesus Christ, *God's Elect*, told us plainly of it, when he preached the gospel to the poor, and proclaimed liberty to the captives. It is to him we look for the words of eternal life.

3d. The word, IMMORTALITY, is mentioned where we are told who will be sharers in it.———Rom. II, 7. "To them, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and IMMORTALITY; eternal life."

Many people think that all will be raised IMMORTAL at the resurrection. If they are, they will all be equal to the angels, having eternal life. IMMORTALITY is one of the glorious blessings of the gospel, promised only to those who obey the gospel. There is not a single promise of IMMORTALITY to those who die in their sins, in all the scriptures of truth. It is mentioned in the following verses, that the contentious, and disobedient, shall perish in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to the gospel Paul preached to the world.

4th. The word is used to shew what will be IMMORTAL. 1 Cor. XV. 53, 54. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on IMMORTALITY; So when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on IMMORTALITY; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.

These are the only places where the words IMMORTAL and IMMORTALITY are used. Here we may learn from Christ and the Apostles what it means, where it is, who shall share in it, what will be IMMORTAL, and the glorious time when it shall take place—when the followers of the Lamb, shall be raised incorruptible, bearing the image of the heavenly. Then the body, sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption—sown in dishonor, shall be raised in power—sown a natural, shall be raised a spiritual body. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working

whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Surely here is enough to encouruge every rational creature on earth to seek for glory, honor, IMMORTALITY and eternal life. To such as seek for it the promise of eternal life is made, and shall be fulfilled. So be it.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

The state of religious Liberty in Rhodeisland and in that part of Massachusetts near that State, is truly pleasing to a lover of real freedom. In *Providence* there is still found that true spirit of christian Liberty, which the old baptist mininister, Mr. Roger Williams, the first settler in that town contended for. A proof of this liberal spirit has been manifest by the inhabitants of that flourishing town, in the following particular: Some time past they purchased a very large meeting-house of the Presbyterians for the use of the town; and that the people might be accommodated with a place to hear any stranger who should wish to preach in the town, whom the ministers of the town would not receive. Whenever a preacher comes into the town, if any man wishes to hear him, he opens the house, gives notice, and all hear who wish. There is of course no disturbance, no complaint, and every man has an opportunity to hear and judge for himself. The same spirit which banished Mr. Williams from Massachusetts to Providence, is yet lurking in dark places, and certain individuals of a privileged class, would prevent the exercise of this freedom if it were in their power it is likely; but the voice of the people at present prevails above the priests. How noble does the conduct of this town appear when compared with the bigotry and superstition which reigns in the great towns of Newhampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut!!

In several towns around *Providence* the friends of liberty have built, what they call free meeting-houses. They are built with seats, free for all to hear in, and free for any to preach in, whom the people wish to hear. Our brethren in *New-Bedford*, have built an house this season upon the same plan. It is 45 feet by 40; with a room under the whole, designed for church meetings, and other public uses. They contemplate building another upon the same plan in *Fair-Haven*, the opposite side of the river. The change in the minds of the people in this town within one year is very great; for great multitudes are turned to the Lord, and walk in newness of life. In Rehoboth, about forty have of late owned the Lord, and been baptized in his name, and a great number in Dighton the town adjoining. Rochester a town near Bedford has been a great sharer in the presence of the Lord.

A FEW REFLECTIONS.

"WE live in what is called *The United States of America.—United States!* A name that promises peace and happiness to every citizen; but, under this specious name of Union, what a picture is exhibited? A great Christian empire, divided into a thousand little kingdoms, all inclosed in the bowels of a great republic, and each contending for the mastery. America exulting in her health, the liberty and equality of her members, and yet full of worms, biting and devouring one another, each pursuing a distinct cause to which he presumes all others must finally give way. The Presbyterian minister, the Baptist, Methodist, Christian and Church minister, each proposing to reduce the whole commonwealth under his laws and government. In the midst of these party attachments, who shall be governor, representative, magistrate, major, captain, &c.? This question at once proves the spirit of the union while it arouses christian against christian, party against party, each to contend with his fellow professor, who shall be the greatest. Tell it not in Great-Britain! Publish it not in the streets of London! Lest the daughters of Babylon sneer at the apparent effects of civil and religious liberty.

I am thankful to the disposer of all human events, that I was not more than seven years old when the American eagle first streched her pinions and began her ascent toward the air of liberty. And therefore, the meridian of my temporal life is at a period when reputed fools and fanatics no longer smoke on the altar of *Christianity*, but every man's religion may be correctly examined of whatsoever kind it is.—Surely, if Church officers knew it they might as well be still and silent, as to try to croud back and shut up their flocks and cry, Wolves! Wolves! For every man's character must be known in this day, and each one judged not by his good words and fair speeches, but according to his WORKS."

POETRY.

FOR THE HERALD.

MR. EDITOR,

By giving the following lines a place in your Herald of Gospel Liberty, you will much oblige yours, &c.

A SUBSCRIBER.

JUSTICE, THE SINNER, AND MERCY.

SAYS Justice, "Man, I'd fain know what you weigh,
If *weight*, I spare you, if *too light*, I slay;"
Man leap'd the scale, it mounted on my word!
Says Justice, "*Less than nothing*—where's my sword?"
Virtue was there, and all her weight would try,
The scale unsunk, still kept the beam on high;
MERCY the whitest Dove that ever flew,
From Calv'ry fetch'd a twig of crimson hue,
Aloft it sent the scale on th' other side,
Man smil'd—and JUSTICE own'd I'm SATISFY'D.

D. J.

Our poetical correspondent will recollect, that "Communications post paid".....A WORD TO THE WISE.

DIED.]—In this town, Oct. 14, Samuel Neil, aged 20; an amiable young man, who shot deep, rose high, and spread fair for manhood, but is gone. In his *death*, the parents have lost an affectionate son, the children a loving brother, the church a loving and amiable member. Yet we mourn not as they which have no hope. His dying language gave all around a joyful evidence that he now sleeps in Jesus. Ye who are now in the morning of life, hear the voice of Wisdom, "consider your latter end," and, "*prepare to meet thy God.*"

"When blooming youth are snatch'd away,
By death's resistless hand;
Our hearts the mournful tribute pay,
Which pity must demand.

While pity prompts the rising sigh,
O may this truth, imprest
With awful power—I too must die!
Sink deep in ev'ry breast.

Let this vain world engage no more,
Behold the gaping tomb!
It bids us seize the present hour,
To-morrow, death may come!"

At New Durharm last Saturday, Elder Benjamin Rondel, Æt. 63.

N. B. We hope our friends will not think that so long a Sermon on the times, as the one in the first page is unnecessary, at such a time as this. We have felt it our particular duty to mention these things to you, hoping that each one who has a regard to their own happiness, that of their children, friends or fellow men, will ever endeavour to have understanding of the times that each one may know what they ought to do.

In our next number we expect to furnish our readers with some interesting Religious Intelligence, from this country, and from India, particularly respecting the late translation of the scriptures, among that superstitious people, with some account of things favourable among the Jews.

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